



GUARD AND RESERVE FAMILY READINESS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY



“We could not maintain our military without the Guard and Reserve. It would be cut in half. We couldn’t do the job in Bosnia, we couldn’t do it in the Gulf, we couldn’t do it anywhere.”

Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen

Preparing Reserve Families for Mobilization

Families are essential when it comes to readiness and mission support. As the saying goes, “We recruit the members and we retain the families.” Guard and Reserve families face special challenges in adjusting to military life, especially during activation.

When Guard and Reserve members are called to active duty, their families need timely information and accurate answers that address their needs and concerns. In some instances, Guard and Reserve families are unable to get information or family-related services due to geographic separation from military installations. In fact, some 245,000 reservists live more than 50 miles away from the nearest active duty military base. Some families might not know where to turn for help when a family member is deployed — they may not even know assistance is available. In many cases, family members need ID cards that give them access to medical care, commissary privileges and other important services. Other Guard and Reserve families have never heard the terms CHAMPUS, TRICARE and SGLI. In order to minimize hardships and promote the readiness of our Total Force, we must educate our military families *before* contingencies arise.

Marital and Parental Status of Reservists*



Reserve Component Family Readiness Initiative

Although substantial progress has been made to disseminate information and provide referral assistance to Guard and Reserve families, much work remains to be done. Within the Department of Defense, the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs and the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense's (Personnel Support, Families and Education) Office of Family Policy have developed a partnership to respond to the quality-of-life needs of Guard and Reserve members and their families. The Reserve Component Family Readiness Initiative aims to:

- ★ Emphasize Reserve component family readiness as an integral part of Total Force readiness
- ★ Identify existing Active and Reserve component family readiness resources available to Reserve component families
- ★ Develop a Reserve component family readiness strategic plan which addresses the unique circumstances of Reserve component families.

Family readiness planning has now been formalized within the Department of Defense. For the first time, Reserve component families are included in family readiness programs and planning at the Secretary of Defense level. The military services evaluate, as part of their routine procedures, family readiness as it affects the Reserve components. Most Guard and Reserve units have identified, or are in the process of establishing, a single point of contact for information, referral services and other family needs.

Challenges for Future Family Readiness

Several challenges must be overcome if we are to achieve family program integration within the Total Force:

21st Century Challenges

- ✓ Enhance Guard and Reserve participation in Total Force family policy planning and decision making processes
- ✓ Develop a formalized process to disseminate family-related information policies and guidelines to all families

Guard and Reserve Family Readiness for the 21st Century

The National Guard and Reserve: Critical Contributors to the Total Force

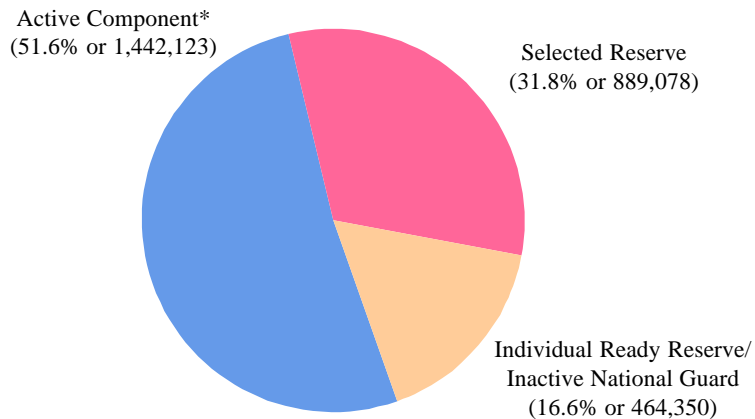
There are seven U.S. military Reserve components: The Army National Guard, Army Reserve, Naval Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve and Coast Guard Reserve.

The purpose of these Guard and Reserve forces is to provide combat-ready units and individuals to the nation's military forces when necessary. Their missions vary in accordance with the requirements and needs articulated in the National Military Strategy.

Half the Total Force

The nearly 1.4 million men and women who serve in our Ready Reserve comprise one-half of our Total Force; and they are an integral part of that force—we cannot undertake sustained military operations anywhere in the world without them. Since the end of the Cold War, Guard and Reserve forces have served in support of contingency operations in the Persian Gulf, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Southwest Asia, and Kosovo.

Total Force Composition

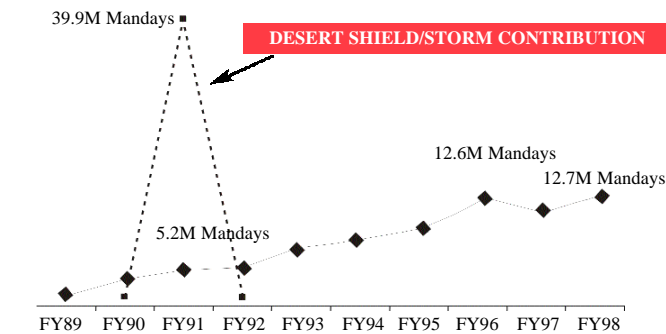


Source: Reserve Component Common Personnel Data System:1998 DD-RA Year End Report

* Includes Service academy students and the Coast Guard

Increased Use of Reserve Forces

Today's Guard and Reserve forces are making vital contributions on a daily basis around the globe. Over the past three years, for example, the Guard and Reserve have contributed nearly 13 million mandays of support annually to total force missions—the equivalent of adding some 35,000 personnel to the active force, or two Army divisions. About 900,000 selected reservists are performing their military service in more than 4,100 communities throughout the nation, while another 460,000 individual ready reservists are highly trained and available for recall to military service in the event of war or national emergency.



Source: Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs (OASD/RA)

These facts and figures help demonstrate that America's Guard and Reserve are operating effectively in today's strategic environment. They are being called upon in more cases and more places than ever before. This chart depicts the increasing contributions of the National Guard and Reserve to total Department of Defense missions.

In the post-Cold War era, we have come to rely heavily on our National Guard and Reserve, not just as Reserve forces in waiting but as critical contributors to the work of the Total Force. Every day around the globe thousands of active duty men and women in uniform risk their lives and make tremendous sacrifices in the national interest. Increasingly, reservists are there alongside, serving extended tours away from their homes, families and jobs. These absences present tremendous challenges to reservists and their families. The Department of Defense continues to seek new ways to reach out to Guard and Reserve families and is working hard to minimize the disruptions and hardships associated with Reserve component